

**FINAL / Minutes of the Tree and Landscape Board
City Hall, City of College Park
January 21, 2015**

<u>Term Exp.</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
N/A	Brenda Alexander, Public Works Deputy Director	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
N/A	Steven Beavers, Planning Dept. Representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11/30/2016	John Krouse, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12/31/2014	John Lea-Cox, City Forester	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9/30/2016	Joseph Smith, Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10/31/2016	Mark Wimer, Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>			
N/A	Gemma Evans, CBE Liaison	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
N/A	Janis Oppelt, CBE Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Also in attendance: Vivian Cooper, Animal Control Officer, City of College Park
Marty Lieb, P.G. County Staff Forester
Dan Landry, Pepco Senior Staff Forester
Tammy Watkins, Pepco Government Affairs

Mr. Krouse called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. Discussion with Pepco Representatives

Pepco reiterated that their vegetation management work is performed in accordance with local ordinances and state law to achieve compliance with RM43, and their interest is primarily in ensuring the safe delivery of electricity. They believe that there is room for trees and electricity to co-exist safely, which motivates a lot of the work they do.

Dr. Lea-Cox questioned structural issues regarding crown removal and asked if a street tree replacement program is in place. In regard to the trees that are severely pruned, he asked if it is better to take them out completely and replant them on the opposite side of the street rather than have repeated prunings, which causes repeated complaints from residents. The Pepco representatives replied that the work they perform has standards for pruning and that the overall health of the tree as well as its distance from the power lines is taken into consideration.

Ms. Alexander currently receives a list of daily crew locations, and she is now contacted 2 to 3 months prior to work being done and reviews the plan with the planner. Tree removals on private property require permission from the homeowner; they have the option to call and refuse the work, unless Pepco has purchased easement rights. Tree removals on city property require permission from the City. Once notified that work will occur, the City Council, City Manager, and Civic Association presidents receive emails to let them know that work is planned for their neighborhood.

When line clearance work is identified, Pepco sends a mass mailing to municipalities. Individual homeowners also receive a door hanger with check boxes to indicate "routine pruning" or "removal" as well as the planner's name and phone number. A certified contracted arborist

attempts to contact each affected homeowner; if not home, a door hanger is left for the homeowner to contact Pepco if they have any concerns. If the homeowners do not reply, their tree will be pruned to the required clearance. The arborist uses GPS-collected data regarding removals and pruning from each tree. The two reasons for this data are: (1) so that Pepco has a clear understanding of the planned work before contracting the work; and (2) to hold the tree contractor accountable for their work.

Once the work has been completed, a Pepco representative conducts a followup inspection, and the contractor may be required to return if any work is deemed unsatisfactory, such as work that was on the plan but not done. A quality control audit of Pepco's work is also conducted. If a homeowner wants a tree removed, Pepco is willing to do that and the homeowner may qualify for a tree replacement voucher.

Ms. Alexander stated that the City is receiving trees on a 1-to-1 replacement, even though a large diameter tree may be replaced with a smaller caliber tree. She also stated that the City received a grant from the Prince George's County Releaf Program in the spring and has been replacing removed trees as required by the Department of Natural Resources. In addition, she stated that significantly disfigured or potentially weakened trees as a result of line clearance work have been removed when requested.

At the close of the discussion, Ms. Alexander reminded the Pepco representatives of the February 3 Council Work Session in City Hall.

Following the discussion with the Pepco representatives, the TLB briefly discussed putting together an informational flyer from the City for the residents similar to Pepco's door hanger. (That discussion will continue at February meeting).

2. Miscellaneous

ACO Cooper stated that a resident has complained about beavers chewing on trees on private property along the creek at the end of Narragansett Run. She received a picture of the damage from Councilmember Kabir. The City cannot hire trappers to trap on private property; the property owner has to be the hiring agency. Beaver trapping season ends on March 16.

3. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Motion: The December 17, 2014 Tree and Landscape Board meeting minutes were approved, moved, and seconded, with corrections.

4. Public Works

The landscape crews have performed pruning along Edmonston Road to improve clearance from the traffic lane.

5. Planning Activities

Contracts are being prepared for the Low Impact Development Center to work on the bioswales along Rhode Island Avenue and also the Stormwater Project. Mr. Beavers will meet with the Green Team (certified by the State of Maryland) on January 22 to discuss community garden planning where one of three potential sites will be selected:

- An empty lot of land owned by the University at the corner of Norwich and Princeton
- The Calvert Hills Park
- The property along the corner at the end of Ruatan Street on the western side.

Mr. Beavers feels that the Old Town site will be selected. It was identified as the area with the most residents interested in a community garden, and the area is the most favorable to community gardening conditions since it is already cleared with mostly grass, and is sunny for the most part with easy water access. In addition, there is good potential for collaboration with the University and a lot of activity (potential gardeners) in the area.

6. Hollywood Commercial District Streetscape Improvements

A meeting will be held tomorrow for a public forum for the planners to show their initial design and concept. The City appropriated \$205,000 in FY2010 for design engineering and construction of streetscape improvements. It was suggested that the TLB be represented at the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, January 28, at 7:00 p.m. at Davis Hall.

7. Rt. 1 Landscape Plans

No updated plans have yet been received. At some point, the TLB will formulate a list of questions that will be communicated to Terry Schum for the next design meeting.

8. Arbor Day

Arbor Day will be celebrated on Friday, May 1, at 6:00 p.m. in Old Town at the same location as last year (between Calvert and Knox Roads). The TLB will honor Amelia Murdoch by planting a large tree and placing an engraved rock or plaque in her remembrance.

9. City Tree Inventory Report

Mr. Smith reported that he put a message out to the LinkedIn Urban Forestry group to request copies of tree reports they had done for their city inventories, and he received many responses.

10. Adjournment

Motion: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the January 21, 2015 meeting:

The TLB meeting adjourned ~ 9:00 p.m. The next TLB meeting is scheduled for February 18 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Minutes prepared by Debra Pinkett, Contract Secretary for the City of College Park